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New catalog is targeted to gay community

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Abstract:

The latest addition to the mail-order melee is Shocking Gray, which its promoters say is the first mainstream catalog aimed at lesbians and gays.

*The 20-some pages of the slick **catalog** include home accessories, **greeting cards**, linens, luggage, T-shirts, jewelry and gourmet foods. Many of the products are made by lesbian and gay artisans.*

Full Text:

Copyright Chicago Tribune Co. Nov 24, 1991

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The primary distinction between Shocking Gray and other catalogs is the way it presents its merchandise.

"Our products are not inherently gay, but by ... by showing our items in lifestyle shots, with same-sex couples, we're validating and giving credibility to the gay and lesbian lifestyle," says Michelle Friesenhahn, an art director and one of the catalog's three founders.

Other partners in the San Antonio-based venture are Cynthia Cesnalis, a former hotel-industry executive; and David Owen, a recent college graduate.

They chose the name because "we wanted to shock people, in a nice way ... and gray is a sort of neutral zone," says Friesenhahn.

In the several weeks since the release of its premiere catalog, Friesenhahn says response has been "overwhelming."

"We're an affluent minority willing to spend our dollars on people who give credibility to our lifestyle."

For a catalog, call 800-788-4729.

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